



RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

FY 2009 ANNUAL REPORT

RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

Donald Carcieri, Governor

Linda H. Newton, Chairperson



RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

December 17, 2009

Commissioners

Linda H. Newton *Chair*

Corinne Calise Russo, *1st Vice Chair*

Carol Gibbons, Ph.D., *2nd Vice Chair*

Joanne M. Hill, *Treasurer*

Beverly Turner, *Secretary*

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Lorraine Hynes

Dawn L. Huntley

Donna Huntley Newby, Ph.D., RN

Victoria Johnson

Helene Martin, RNC, CAGS, NCC

Representative Eileen S. Naughton

Sarah H. Rockett, M.A.

Neena Savage, Esquire

Marilyn Coccozza Trillo

Dear Governor Carcieri and Honorable Members of the General Assembly:

It is my pleasure to forward the FY 2009 Annual Report of the Rhode Island Commission on Women (RICW) in accordance with R.I.G.L. 42-119-6. This report highlights the significant activities undertaken by the RICW in fulfilling its legislated purpose to advance women toward full equity in all areas of life. During this fiscal year, the RICW:

- Held the Women of the Year Event to recognize outstanding women leaders and role models, and to raise funds to support the Freda H. Goldman Educational Award;
- Awarded the Freda Goldman Education Award;
- Advocated for legislative and policy changes to protect the rights of women; and,
- Educated women and girls regarding increased earning potential in non-traditional careers.

The report provides a brief overview of the important achievements of the RICW's various Standing and Ad Hoc Committees. These committees are chaired by volunteer Commissioners and are comprised of numerous other volunteers from the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors who provide invaluable contributions of time, expertise and unwavering commitment to the work of the RICW on behalf of the women and girls of Rhode Island.

Included in the Governor's FY 2010 Supplemental Budget is the elimination of funding to the Rhode Island Commission on Women (RICW). Though the statute creating and defining the RICW (R.I.G.L. 42-119) has not been repeal, zeroing out the budget would effectively eliminate the Commission.

The RICW has been pro-active in seeking ways to save tax payer dollars and has offered alternative strategies for gradually reducing General Fund appropriations. To abruptly end funding in the current fiscal year means that current projects, well under way, would have to be suspended, such as the Girls Non-Traditional Trades Forum and the Women's Policy Institute Fellowship Women's Microfinance Project in addition to other collaborative projects in which the RICW has taken leadership roles.

We urge you to restore full funding to the RICW.

Sincerely,

Linda H. Newton
Chairperson

Staff

Shanna Wells, M.Ed., *Director*



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FY 2009 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rhode Island Commission on Women (RICW) is a state agency established to improve opportunities for women and girls to achieve equity. The Commission studies and makes recommendations for improvements, including legislative, regulatory, and administrative actions and issues related to equal rights for women. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Commission works in cooperation with other governmental and private organizations to promote equity including – but not limited to – the following areas of concern: education, health, economic development, employment, legal rights, political participation and the quality of individual and family life.

The Commission consists of twenty-six members, including three each from the House and Senate, twelve public members appointed by the Governor, and eight members appointed by State agency directors. State agency participation may vary from year to year, depending upon the identification of priorities by the Commission. The Commission carries out its responsibilities through standing and ad hoc committees, the membership of which consists of appointed commissioners and numerous volunteers dedicated to the rights of women and girls.

In FY 2009, the RICW's work focused on the following:

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

DELTA State Steering Committee

The Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) Project is funded through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and is intended to prevent first time perpetration and first time victimization of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The DELTA Project is a 14 state domestic violence coalition collaboration with the CDC that aims to change social norms and conditions that allow IPV to exist.

Begun in 2006, the Rhode Island Commission on Women, along with the other members of the Rhode Island State Steering Committee (SSC) completed an 18 month planning process to identify which populations were most at risk for IPV perpetration in RI, and which evidence-supported primary prevention strategies would ameliorate risk factors and enhance protective factors across the individual, relationship, community and societal levels of Rhode Island. State readiness and capacity to implement the prevention strategy, cultural relevance and appropriateness, and evidence of effectiveness were some of the considerations of the RI SSC. Funded for an additional three years, the DELTA Project is now focusing on implementing the statewide plan.

Anti-Human Trafficking Legislation

The RI Commission on Women, in partnership with the RI Coalition Against Human Trafficking, Day One, and Polaris Project worked to educate the public and legislature about this issue. The RICW advocated for the passage of Senate Bill 607/House Bill 5661, which would strengthen



current legislation in the state. The bills both passed, but were substantially different from each other. The RICW made recommendations for a compromise bill. The legislature recessed in June without making a determination on the issue of Human Trafficking. However, they returned in October and approved the bill. Governor Carcieri signed the bill into law on November 4, 2009.

WOMEN IN NON-TRADITIONAL TRADES

Girls Non-Traditional Trades Forum

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, high paying jobs can be found in the construction trades and the sciences and technologies. However, only about nine percent of those jobs are held by women, and young women are under-represented in enrollment in Career and Technical centers, apprenticeship programs and college courses in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). The RICW felt strongly the importance of educating young women about available opportunities in non-traditional trades for women.

On March 28, 2009, the RICW's Second Annual Girls Non-Traditional Trades Forum was held on at the New England Laborers Construction Career Academy, in Cranston. Over 125 middle and high school girls from around the state participated in the day-long, hands-on, experiential learning event. The RI Commission on Women partnered with twenty federal, state and local organizations to create this event.

Girls were introduced to construction skills, taught to them by women currently working in the trades. Skills taught included: carpentry, electrical, lead abatement, use of an acetylene torch, tapping a water main, driving a crane simulator, and reading blue prints. Additionally, information was provided on enrollment in career and technical centers, higher technical education facilities and apprenticeship programs. A panel discussion with women currently in the trades provided program participants with opportunities to ask questions and interact with local tradeswomen.

Northeastern Girls Collaborative

On May 16, 2009, Rhode Island's Northeastern Girl's Collaborative held a kick-off event to inform interested parties about the program.

The Northeastern Girls Collaborative brings together organizations throughout New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts and Rhode Island that are committed to informing and motivating girls to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Too often programs that serve girls in STEM are limited in service and impact due to size, location, funding, expertise and equipment. In other cases, projects compete with each other, duplicating services and seeking the same resources. The Northeastern Girls Collaborative



provides the opportunity for programs to increase their ability to maintain interest and participation of girls in STEM within their regions through collaboration.

The Northeastern Girls Collaborative is based upon a model developed by the National Girls Collaborative Project, and replicated through a grant from the National Science Foundation. The model is structured to bring organizations together to compare needs and resources, share information, and to plan strategically to expand STEM-related opportunities for girls.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Women Ending Hunger

In FY 2009, the Rhode Island Commission on Women worked to educate the public about the issues of hunger and food insecurity, and its impact on women. The RICW submitted Op/Ed pieces to statewide newspapers, calling attention to the issue of women and hunger. Additionally, the RICW held fundraising events for the Women Ending Hunger Program.

Women Ending Hunger (WEH) is a program of the RI Community Food Bank, which strives to increase participation in the Food Stamp program and to educate low income individuals about stretching grocery dollars and cooking healthily on a budget. According to the RI Community Food Bank, Over 70% of people utilizing emergency food donations are women.

The RICW sponsored a production of the one-woman musical comedy, *Mrs. Claus in Menopause* as a fundraiser for WEH. Additionally, the RICW hosted *Will Paint for Food*, an art show and sale by local artist Shawn Kenney. The combined fundraising efforts raised \$1,800 for the WEH program.

RECOGNITION OF OUTSTANDING WOMEN

Women of the Year

On October 8, 2009, the Rhode Island Commission on Women (RICW) held its annual Woman of the Year event at the Radisson Airport Hotel to honor Lynn Ewart-Paine, Ph.D., Kathleen Hittner, M.D., Beverly Najarian, Senator, M. Teresa Paiva Weed, Carol Shelton Ph.D, R.N. and Toby Simon, M.Ed., for their outstanding contributions to Rhode Island women. Hosted by Karen Adams of WPRI-12, the event was attended by more than three hundred people. The honorees were selected for their individual achievements and dedication to improving the status of women in Rhode Island.

Freda H. Goldman Education Award

The Freda H. Goldman Education Awards Fund, administered by the Rhode Island Foundation, provides annual awards to women who need financial assistance in order to pursue an education or job training beyond high school. The awards are given for transportation, child care, tutoring, educational materials or other support services (not including tuition) that may



be necessary to help women complete their educational goals. Five women received awards in FY 09.

NON-PROFIT DEVELOPMENT

The RICW Project

Though R.I.G.L. § 42-119-7 allows the Commission on Women to solicit grant and foundation funding, this has been difficult to achieve. Foundations focused specifically on women's issues tend to fund programs or agencies that have a 501(c) (3) non-profit designation by the IRS. In order for the Rhode Island Commission on Women to be eligible to apply for these monies, the Commissioners developed a non-profit organization, run by a separate board of directors, whose purpose is to support the mission and projects of the RICW.

On November 14, 2008, The RICW Project was incorporated as a non-profit corporation in the State of Rhode Island. With the assistance of a *pro bono* attorney, an application was submitted to the Internal Revenue Service for federal recognition of non-profit status on June 22, 2009. The 501(c) (3) status was granted on July 26, 2009.

Invitations were sent soliciting Board Members to participate, and on March 3, 2009, a joint meeting of the Commission on Women and The RICW Project was held. The Board of the RICW Project is now developing strategies for fund development.



RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN MEMBERSHIP

FY 2009 Officers of RICW

Linda H. Newton	Chairperson
Corinne Calise Russo	First Vice-Chair
Carol Gibbons	Second Vice-Chair
Joanne Hill	Treasurer
Beverly Turner	Secretary

Gubernatorial Appointments

Nancy Carrioulo

Carol Gibbons, Ph.D.

Dawn Huntley

Victoria Johnson

Linda H. Newton

Sarah H. Rockett, M.A.

Marilyn Coccozza Trillo

Departmental Appointments

Carrie Bridges, MPH
Health

Joanne M. Hill, MPA
Corrections

Lorraine Hynes
Administration

Helene C. Martin, RNC, CAGS, NCC
Mental Health, Retardation and
Hospitals

Corinne Calise Russo
Elderly Affairs

Neena Sinha Savage, Esquire
Business Regulations

Beverly Turner
Children, Youth and Families

Legislative Appointments

Former Senator Catherine Graziano

Representative Joanne Giannini

Representative Eileen Naughton

RICW Staff

Shanna Wells, M.Ed.
Director
Project Management and



MISSION AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

MISSION

The mission of the Rhode Island Commission on Women (RICW) is to support women in achieving full equality in all areas of life, through the promotion of rights and opportunities for all women. RICW envisions a society where all women have achieved full equity in all aspects of life. The Commission:

- is a forum where all women can be heard;
- embraces the concept of full participation by all Rhode Island women;
- facilitates opportunities for education and advocacy, through collaborating and networking.

STATUTORY HISTORY

In 1970 the General Assembly established a nonpartisan organization entitled the Permanent Advisory Commission on Women in Rhode Island. After 22 years of status as an advisory commission, in 1992, the General Assembly amended the General Laws of Rhode Island (Title 42, Chapter 119) to restructure the membership of the Commission and to change its status from an advisory body to an agency of Rhode Island Government charged with the responsibilities enumerated below.

AGENCY OPERATIONS

RICW is a State agency established to improve opportunities for women and girls to achieve equity. The Commission studies and makes recommendations for improvements, including legislative, regulatory, and administrative actions and issues related to equal rights for women. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Commission works in cooperation with other governmental and private organizations to promote equity including – but not limited to – the following areas of concern: education, health, economic development, employment, legal rights, political participation and the quality of individual and family life.

The Commission consists of twenty-six members, including three each from the House and Senate, twelve public members appointed by the Governor, and eight members appointed by State agency directors. State agency participation may vary from year to year, depending upon the identification of priorities by the Commission. The Commission carries out its responsibilities through standing and ad hoc committees, the membership of which consists of appointed commissioners and numerous volunteers dedicated to the rights of women and girls.



AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY (R.I.G.L. 42-119-3)

- To advise and submit recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on issues relating to women;
- To gather and disseminate information to women and/or the general public on issues relating to women;
- To develop and/or support programs or services for women consistent with the purpose of the Commission;
- To collaborate with concerned organizations, groups and State departments on issues of common concern;
- To educate and encourage women to exercise the right to vote; encourage candidacy for public office and promote the appointment of qualified women to boards, commissions and government positions at all levels;
- To evaluate, monitor and propose federal and state legislation and advise legislators on issues relating to women;
- To advocate for women's equity in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.



2009 – 2010 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Rhode Island Commission on Women will focus their attention on five key areas:

- Economic Equity
- Outreach and Advocacy
- Education
- Health
- Political Participation

ECONOMIC EQUITY

The Rhode Island Commission on Women will address the area of Economic Equity for women by:

- Proposing and advocating for Pay Equity and Comparable Worth legislation
- Educating girls and women about opportunities in non-traditional trades via the Girls Non-Traditional Trades Forum, the New England Girls Collaborative and research on technical and trade enrollment in Rhode Island

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

The Rhode Island Commission on Women will address the area of Outreach and Advocacy for women by:

- Reviewing, proposing and advocating for legislation that better the lives of women and girls in Rhode Island
- Educating the public through op/ed pieces regarding legislative issues, the state of the women's prison, women's health issues, Human Trafficking and others
- Collaborate with other state and non-profit agencies on projects that benefit women
- Host the annual Women of the Year event, recognizing exemplary women from Rhode Island

EDUCATION

The Rhode Island Commission on Women will address the area of Education for women by:

- Distributing the Freda H. Goldman Education Award annually
- Educating girls and women about opportunities in non-traditional trades via the Girls Non-Traditional Trades Forum, the New England Girls Collaborative and research on technical and trade enrollment in Rhode Island

HEALTH

The Rhode Island Commission on Women will address the area of Women's Health by:



- Collaborating with Health Organizations to promote women's health initiatives
- Advocate for increased funding for detection and treatment of breast cancer
- Advocate for increased awareness and protection of women's heart health
- Advocate for decreased infant mortality rates in Rhode Island's minority populations
- Advocate for treatment for and prevention of HIV in women

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The Rhode Island Commission on Women will encourage Rhode Island women to participate more fully in the political process by running for office and advocating with their local legislators.

Additionally, the Commission will strengthen their operations and increase the name recognition of the Commission by:

- Increasing member engagement
 - Fill all vacant seats
 - Give more direction to members
 - More extensively orient new members
- Increase visibility and name recognition
 - Develop an e-newsletter to be distributed quarterly to all state officials, women-serving agencies and the RICW list serve
 - Distribute quarterly op/ed pieces to local media
 - Invite the Senate President to an RICW meeting
 - Connect with women legislators
 - Inform local women serving organizations about RICW's priority issues
- Continue development of the RICW Project
 - Obtain 501 (c) (3) non-profit status
 - Determine, along with RICW Project board, Project priorities
 - Develop fundraising capacity
 - Support the Annual Women of the Year Event



LEGISLATIVE AND LEGAL RIGHTS COMMITTEE

CHAIR

Catherine Graziano

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Honorable Joanne Giannini, Representative
The Honorable Carol Mumford, Representative
The Honorable Eileen Naughton, Representative

EX-OFFICIO

Linda H. Newton
Shanna Wells, M.Ed.

PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION

The Legislative and Legal Rights Committee is established for the purpose of advising and assisting the RICW on matters relating to the legal rights of women, to monitor and review existing and proposed legislation pertaining to women and to make recommendations to the Executive Committee/Full Commission on these issues.

Anti-Human Trafficking Legislation

The RI Commission on Women, in partnership with the RI Coalition Against Human Trafficking, Day One, and Polaris Project worked to educate the public and legislature about this issue. The RICW worked closely with bill sponsors on the development of legislation and advocated for the passage of Senate Bill 607/House Bill 5661, which would strengthen current laws in the state. The bills both passed, but were substantially different from each other. The RICW made recommendations for a compromise bill. The legislature recessed in June without making a determination on the issue of Human Trafficking. However, they returned in October and approved the bill. Governor Carcieri signed the bill into law on November 4, 2009.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

CHAIR

Sarah Rockett

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Carol Gibbons

Victoria Johnson

Beverly Turner

EX-OFFICIO

Linda H. Newton

Shanna Wells, M.Ed.

PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Education Committee is to advise and assist the RICW on all education related issues pertaining to women. The committee is made up of members of the Commission who choose to work on educational issues.

Girls Non-Traditional Trades Forum

Background

In 2008, the Rhode Island Commission on Women's (RICW) Education Committee initiated the First Annual Girls Non-Traditional Trades Forum. Held at The Community College of Rhode Island's Flannigan Campus in Lincoln, Rhode Island, the event provided four hands-on work stations in Carpentry, Electrical, Bricklaying and Lead Abatement. Approximately 40 girls and women attended the event. While the turn-out was modest, the exit evaluations indicated that attendees enjoyed the event and experienced a profound paradigm shift regarding a career in the trades. Emboldened by this modest success, the RICW proposed to expand the event in 2009.

The Second Annual Girls Non-Traditional Trades Forum was held on Saturday, March 28, 2009, 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM, Construction Career Academy, 4 Sharpe Drive, Cranston, RI 02920.

2009 Program Partners

The RICW was fortunate to collaborate with the following organizations on the 2009 Girls Non-Traditional Trades Forum:

- The New England Laborers Union



- The New England Laborers Construction Career Academy
- Carpenters Union Local 94
- Union of Operating Engineers Local 57
- The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 99
- Di Prete Engineering
- General Environmental Services
- Dimeo Construction
- Gilbane Construction
- University of Rhode Island Transportation Center
- The Rhode Island Department of Transportation
- Women in Transportation
- National Association of Women in Construction
- The Rhode Island Trades Women’s Association
- U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau, Department of Apprenticeship, OSHA
- YWCA Northern Rhode Island
- Big Sisters of Rhode Island
- The College Crusade
- Community College of Rhode Island
- New England Institute of Technology
- Davies Career and Technical Center
- The Steelyard
- Recycle-A-Bike

Collaborating partners supplied materials, equipment, staff, transportation, venue space, food and technical assistance in the planning and execution of the event. Given that the RICW has one full-time staff member with a very modest operating budget, this event would not have been possible without the generous support from the program partners.

The Program

The schedule for the day was as follows:

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Registration/Distribution of Safety Equipment/Welcome/Safety information
10:00 AM – 1:45 PM	Work Shops and Lunch
1:45 PM – 2:30 PM	Completion of Evaluations/Panel Discussion

Eight workshops were provided:

- Carpentry – Build a small shed structure.
- Electrical – Measure and bend conduit to a 90 degree angle.
- Lead Abatement – Properly attire in safety equipment. Determine if lead is present.
- Oxy-Acetylene Torch – Burn a name onto a steel plate.
- Tapping a Water Main – Correctly tap a water main without getting wet!



- Reading Blueprints – Understand the purpose of blueprints and how to read them.
- Crane Simulator – Practice operating large machinery.
- Educational/Apprenticeship Expo – Find out about enrollment in Union Apprenticeship Programs, Career and Technical Centers and Schools.

Program participants were divided into eight groups, and rotated through each of the work stations at 20 minute intervals. A hot lunch was provided to all participants and staff.

Program Participant Demographic Data

A total of 129 girls participated in the event. Exit evaluations were distributed to all attendees still present at 1:45 PM. A total of 94 evaluations were collected, 6 of which were completed by adults. The following data was culled from the 88 evaluations completed by the girls.

Age (N = 88):

AGE (in years)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
11 - 13	69	78.5%
14 - 16	9	10.3%
8 - 10	8	9.0%
17 - 18	2	2.2%

Race (N = 88):

RACE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Caucasian	40	45.4%
Hispanic Non-White	22	25.0%
African American	9	10.2%
Hispanic White	7	8.0%
Other*	7	8.0%
Native American	3	3.4%

* Other – self identified as:

- 2 Cape Verdean
- 1 Hispanic (checked both Hispanic White and Non-White boxes)
- 1 Haitian/Dominican
- 1 African American/Caucasian
- 1 African American/Cape Verdean
- 1 did not identify her race.

**City/Town (N = 88):**

CITY/TOWN	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Providence	28	31.9%
Coventry	14	15.9%
Pawtucket	13	14.8%
West Warwick	9	10.3%
Bristol	5	5.7%
North Scituate	5	5.7%
Scituate	4	4.5%
Woonsocket	3	3.5%
Barrington	1	1.1%
Central Falls	1	1.1%
Smithfield	1	1.1%
Stonington, CT	1	1.1%
Wakefield	1	1.1%
Warwick	1	1.1%
Unidentified	1	1.1%

Paradigm Shift Questions

The RICW's *raison d'être* for hosting this event was to show girls that high-wage jobs are available in a variety of fields – fields they may never have considered before. Research shows that girls who never try non-traditional trades or do not know or see women in non-traditional trades, are unlikely to consider the trades as a viable option for them when they consider future employment. To that end, two questions on the exit evaluation were asked to ascertain whether the girls in attendance could make that mental leap, and perceive non-traditional trades as an option for them.

Before today's event, did you ever consider entering a non-traditional trade? (N = 88)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
No	72	81.8%
Yes	16	18.2%

Since attending today's event, would you consider entering a non-traditional trade? (N = 88)

ANSWER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes	71	80.7%
No	14	15.9%
Maybe	2	2.3%
Don't Know	1	1.1%

If you could change anything about today's event, what would it be? (N = 92)

Though asked for one response, program participants provided multiple answers.



ANSWER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
I would not change anything.	27	29.4%
I wanted more time at each station or a particular station.	23	25.0%
I did not like the food/more/different food or drinks	8	8.7%
Get rid of non-hands on stations/less lecture/talking	6	6.1%
More work stations	4	4.4%
Smaller group size	4	4.4%
Not getting wet at the Water Main Station	4	4.4%
Shorten the event all together	3	3.3%
More chairs/less standing	3	3.3%
The event was boring/make the event more fun	3	3.3%
Lengthen the event all together	2	2.2%
More stickers	1	1.1%
More lunch time	1	1.1%
Do not allow Brownie-age girls to attend/too young	1	1.1%
I would like to build something I could take home	1	1.1%
Start at 9:00 as advertised, not 9:45	1	1.1%

Briefly state one or two things that you learned or found interesting.

Girls provided multiple answers to this question. Overwhelmingly, the girls found the Oxy-Acetylene Torch and Carpentry Workstations interesting, with conduit bending at the Electrical Workstation next in interest. However, all the Workstations were mentioned positively, as was the kindness of all the staff engaged in the event. Some notable comments related to paradigm shift included:

- I would like to do torching when I grow up.
- Not only boys can do construction. Girls can do anything boys can do.
- Not only men work.
- Women can do men's jobs.
- There are a lot of muscle jobs around.
- There are different jobs for girls.



Comments

The comments were overwhelmingly positive. Below are some statements that reflect the girl's general consensus:

- I like this place a lot and hope I can come back.
- When I grow up, I will consider a man's job.
- I had fun and it changed my mind about a lot of things.
- The booths were informative and opened my eyes to other fun trades.
- I learned new experiences and found new interests.
- I thought it would be boring but I was proved wrong. Good job.
- Now I know there are a lot of women who believe we can do anything.



RICW/FREDA H. GOLDMAN EDUCATION AWARD

CHAIR

Victoria Johnson

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Nancy Carriuolo

Anita DeWitt

Carol Gibbons

Mary Ellen Smith

Sarah Rockett

Olivia Rodrigues

EX OFFICIO

Shanna Wells

PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION

This committee serves in an advisory capacity for the RICW to the Rhode Island Foundation. The Rhode Island Commission on Women/Freda H. Goldman Education Awards Fund, through the Rhode Island Foundation, provides annual awards to women who need financial assistance in order to pursue an education or job training beyond high school. The awards are given for transportation, child care, tutoring, educational materials or other support services (not including tuition) that may be necessary to help women complete their educational goals.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING FY 2009

The Committee evaluated 17 applications for the award, and selected five honorees.

RICW funds, combined with donations from the Rhode Island Foundation, allowed for a total of \$4,584 in available funds. .

The recipients were:

Melodie Boyd is a 21 year old Native American and the first in her family to attend college. She is currently entering her junior year at Rhode Island College, majoring in Education. Her goal is to become an elementary school teacher. Ms. Boyd is active in volunteer work and is employed part time as a teaching assistant while enrolled full time in school. Her GPA is 3.7. Awarded \$1,106.



Elizabeth Mederios is a 49 year old, divorced single mother of one teen aged daughter. Ms. Mederios is currently enrolled in her second year at the Community College of Rhode Island, seeking an AS in Chemical Technology and a certificate in Biotechnology. She was laid off from her job and is retraining for a new career. Ms. Mederios is the first in her family to attend college. She is an active volunteer in her daughter's school. Her GPA is 4.0. Awarded \$1,106.

Jazmin Meriweather is 18 years old and is the first in her family to attend college. Ms. Meriweather's mother was laid off from her job and, as a consequence, the family has been made homeless. Ms. Meriweather graduated high schools with a GPA of 3.4, and will be studying Business Administration in college. Awarded \$1,106.

Kelly Mullane is 21 years old, and is a senior seeking a BS and RN in nursing. Ms. Mullane is single, but has acted as a caregiver to her mother who passed away in 2009, and to her younger siblings. Her GPA is 3.77. Awarded \$1,106.

Chithy Saing is a 34 year old single mother and first generation college student. Ms. Saing works full time, and is seeking her Associates Degree from the Community College of Rhode Island in Accounting. Ms. Saing volunteers her time as a board member of the Community Preparatory School. Her GPA is 2.81. Awarded \$160.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE

CHAIR

Marilyn Coccozza Trillo

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Joanne M. Hill

Corinne Calise Russo

Beverly Turner

EX-OFFICIO

Linda H. Newton

Shanna Wells, M.Ed.

PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Community Outreach Committee is to support and promote the RI Commission on Women using public forums, special events and other networking opportunities that acknowledge and encourage the accomplishments of women and girls in Rhode Island. In addition, the committee helps provide opportunities for Rhode Island women to express their needs and concerns and makes recommendations to the Full Commission regarding these matters.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING FY 2009

RICW Website

The RICW Website received 8,869 unduplicated hits during FY 09. The average number of monthly hits was 739, and increase of 138% above FY 08.

Public Relations Activities

The RICW has participated in numerous speaking engagements and other public forums including:

- FY 08 Women of the Year Event
- RI Coalition Against Human Trafficking Rally
- "Feminine Face of Hunger" Op/Ed published in The Cranston Herald
- "Hunger Takes No Holiday" Article published to Web
- Moderated Juvenile Justice Disproportionate Minority Contact in Juvenile Justice Panel
- "Mrs. Claus in Menopause" RI Community Food Bank Women Ending Hunger Fundraiser



- Taught “Wi\$e Up Financial Education” program to women inmates at the ACI
- Emceed the “Martin Luther King Junior Legislative Advocacy” Event, sponsored by the Civil Rights Roundtable
- Mentored La Salle Student on her project relating to Teen Dating Violence
- Moderated National Association of Women In Construction WIC Week Panel Discussion
- Presentation on Women and Employment/Economic Equity to RI Affirmative Action Professionals
- Presenter at the YWCA Northern RI Women in Politics Event
- Second Annual Girls Non-Traditional Trades Forum
- Presented on Human Trafficking to Roger Williams University Law School Class “Gender and the Law”
- “Will Paint for Food” Art Show RI Community Food Bank Women Ending Hunger Fundraiser
- RI Coalition Against Human Trafficking Rally
- Latina Women’s Health Conference
- Northeastern Girls Collaborative Kick Off
- Clothing Collaborative Donation – Women’s Legislative Caucus Donation
- Freda Goldman Ed Awards
- Director Wells accepted as fellow in the Women’s Fund of RI Women’s Policy Institute

Women of the Year Event

Historically, RICW initiated and has regularly presented the RI Women of the Year Award. The event is an important way for RICW to recognize the work of positive female role models who have made significant contributions to women in this state. Awards traditionally are presented at a dinner event for which tickets are sold. Proceeds from ticket sales cover the costs of the event, as well as grant awards to programs facilitating the purposes of RICW in accordance with R.I.G.L. 42-119-7.

In 2005, RICW chose to change the timing of the event from May to October, in order to boost attendance. Because of this change, planning for the event begins in one fiscal year, with the event occurring in the next.

Past honorees include women from all walks of life – Supreme Court Justice, educators, community leaders, public servants, and law enforcement. The event provides not only an opportunity to recognize the contributions of these women, it also provides young people with female role models, raises awareness of important societal issues related to women, and provides funding for grants to programs and projects promoting Rhode Island women, most notably, the RICW/Freda H. Goldman Education Award, administered for RICW by the Rhode Island Foundation (RIF).

As of 2005, the RICW assigned responsibility for the Women of the Year Award and recognition dinner to the Community Outreach Committee. Since 1989, the RICW has presented the



Women of the Year Award to highlight and acknowledge women who have made significant contributions to improve the quality of life for women in our state.

Letters were sent to state departments, social service agencies, private corporations, educational and civil rights organizations, current and past RICW commissioners, committee members, and others soliciting nominations. Twenty-eight nominations were received and evaluated based on predetermined criteria. The Annual event is held in October of every year, with preparatory work for the FY 2009 event occurring in FY 2008.



Op/Ed: THE FEMININE FACE OF HUNGER

Women are 72 percent of clients at food pantries according to a 2006 Rhode Island study by America's Second Harvest. Who are these women? Many are elderly, either living alone or acting as primary caregivers for their grandchildren. According to a Meals on Wheels Association of America study, one in five seniors who live with a grandchild are at risk of hunger. Women make up almost two-thirds of grandparent caregivers. In fact, women head up nearly seven of ten older families living below the poverty level. And single older women are not faring much better. According to an AARP study, nearly one-third of single women age 65-plus are classified as poor.

Gender is clearly a factor when it comes to poverty and food insecurity. Though women are working in unprecedented numbers, there is still a cultural expectation that women will leave the work force to bear and raise children, and to care for aging or infirmed family members. Intermittent employment patterns, lower earnings than men, and jobs that often don't provide employer-sponsored retirement plans place women at risk for living in poverty and food insecurity in their later years. Adding to these factors is the expectation that one-third of the nation's women will live to at least age 90, meaning their retirement income has to stretch farther.

Food Insecurity is defined as the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways. In a 2006 USDA study, the overall rate of food insecurity was about 11 percent nationwide. But among low-income households with children headed by a single woman, the rate of food insecurity jumped to 46 percent. These women do not fit the stereotypes: 30 percent of food pantry clients in Rhode Island have earned income, meaning they work or their spouse works.

So what does this mean? It means that women across the life span – single and working, single with children, working poor, married with or without children, elderly single or with grandchildren – all are at risk of food insecurity. And as we draw toward winter, with zooming oil costs, fewer jobs, and more housing foreclosures, women are at ever increasing risk.

The Rhode Island Commission on Women (RICW) strives to advance women toward full equity in all areas of life and to promote rights and opportunities for all women. The RICW participates in the Women Ending Hunger initiative of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. Women Ending Hunger seeks to provide Rhode Island women with healthy nutrition awareness and home-budgeting opportunities, and to increase their participation in the federal food stamp program. The RICW has launched a community challenge to raise funds for the Women Ending Hunger program. To make your donation, please visit the RICW website at www.ricw.ri.gov and click on the "Donate Now" button. Your generous contribution will help ensure that women-- our mothers, daughters, sisters and grandmothers -- will have a seat at the dining room table.



OP/Ed: HUNGER TAKES NO HOLIDAY

We do it every year: we plan and shop and cook for days prior to that all-important Thanksgiving Day meal. Some of us celebrate the holiday, cozy and relaxed, with just our kids and partners around us. Some host their extended families, friends and neighbors. But whether serving four or forty, the preparation is the same and usually includes at a minimum, turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce, potatoes, veggies, rolls, gravy and desserts.

The average Thanksgiving dinner for four will cost about \$130. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, at the beginning of 2002, an average household spent \$102 per week on food and \$25 per week on gasoline. As of May 2008, food spending was up to \$124 per week and gas prices had more than tripled, to \$83 per week. That is a 23% increase in food costs and a 335% increase in gas costs. During this same time period, home heating oil jumped 379%, from \$1.21 per gallon to \$4.59 per gallon. And while gasoline and home heating oil prices are coming down, oil is still 227% higher than in January, 2002.

Rhode Island currently has the highest unemployment rate in the nation. Foreclosures are on the rise and housing prices are falling, providing less equity to home-owners. According to a recent report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the families with the highest rates of food insecurity (30.2 percent) were headed by single mothers. And this is before the additional expenses of the holiday season and winter. That's why the Rhode Island Commission on Women is urging Rhode Islanders to support the Women Ending Hunger Initiative of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank.

At this time of year, when tables (and waistbands) traditionally groan with plenty, how do families -- already stretched to the breaking point economically -- provide a holiday meal AND have enough left over to provide regular meals as well? Every day of the year, the Rhode Island Community Food Bank and their member agencies work to provide healthy, safe and nutritious food to families throughout the state. Already in 2008, they are serving 40,000 Rhode Islanders per month-- that is a 10 % increase from last year. And that increase happened prior to the nation's current financial crisis and people turning on their heat for the winter.

The Rhode Island Commission on Women (RICW) has launched a community challenge to raise funds for the RI Community Food Bank. To make your donation, please visit the RICW website at www.ricw.ri.gov and click on the "Donate Now" button and make this Thanksgiving better for all Rhode Islanders.



WOMEN OF THE YEAR SELECTION COMMITTEE

CHAIR

Marilyn Coccozza Trillo

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kim Butler

Joanne Hill

Linda H. Newton

Corinne Calise Russo

Debra Saunders

Beverly Turner

Ex Officio

Shanna Wells, M.Ed.

Twenty - eight nominations were received. The Selection Committee met on May 18, 2009 and selected the following as the 2009/2010 awardees:

Lynn Ewart-Paine, Ph.D. – Science & Technology

- International reputation for her expertise on transduction materials.
- Deputy Chief Technology Officer in the US Naval Undersea Warfare Division

Kathleen Hittner, MD - Health

- President and CEO of the Miriam Hospital and the Miriam Hospital Foundation
- Anesthesiologist

Beverly Najarian – Trailblazer

- First woman director of State Dept of Administration
- Currently Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor

Sen. M. Teresa Paiva-Weed – Public Service

- First woman Senate President in RI
- Previously was the first woman Senate Majority Leader, and first Senate Judiciary Chair

Carol Shelton, Ph.D, RN - Education

- Was a Professor at RIC Dept. of Nursing until retired in 2008
- Specialized in Community Health, Health Policy, Women’s Health Teaching



Toby Simon, M.Ed. – Advocacy

- Director, Women’s Center, Bryant University
- Written texts on Peer Education regarding sexual violence, for both colleges and high schools

On October 8, 2009, the Rhode Island Commission on Women (RICW) held its annual Woman of the Year event at the Radisson Airport Hotel. Hosted by Karen Adams of WPRI-12, the event was attended by more than three hundred people. The honorees were selected for their individual achievements and dedication to improving the status of women in Rhode Island.



RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

2009 Women of the Year Event



Lynn Ewart-Paine, Ph.D.



Kathleen Hittner, M.D.



Beverly Najarian



Senator M. Teresa Paiva Weed



Carol Shelton, Ph.D.



Toby Simon, M.Ed.

RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN

2009 Women of the Year Event

October 8, 2009

Radisson Airport Hotel

Warwick, Rhode Island

Hosted by: *Karen Adams, WPRI-TV*

Reception

Dinner

Welcome from the RI Commission on Women

Linda H. Newton, Chairperson

Welcome from the State of Rhode Island

Governor Donald L. Carcieri

Congratulations from Elected Officials

Presentation to 2009 Women of the Year

Lynn Ewart-Paine, Ph.D.

Kathleen Hittner, M.D.

Beverly Najarian

Senator M. Teresa Paiva Weed

Carol Shelton, Ph.D.

Toby Simon, M.Ed.

Closing

RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON WOMEN COMMISSIONERS

Linda Newton, Chair

Kristine Campagna
Nancy Carrioulo
Rep. Joanne Giannini
Carol Gibbons
Catherine Graziano
Joanne Hill
Dawn Huntley
Donna Huntley-Newby
Lorraine Hynes

Victoria Johnson
Carmen Diaz Jusino
Helene Martin
Rep. Eileen Naughton
Sarah Rockett
Corinne Calise Russo
Neena Savage
Marilyn Coccozza Trillo
Beverly Turner

WOMEN OF THE YEAR AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE

Marilyn Coccozza Trillo, Chair

Kim Butler
Joanne Hill
Linda Newton

Corinne Calise Russo
Debra Saunders
Beverly Turner

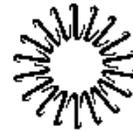
STAFF

Shanna Wells, M.Ed., Director, Project Management and Administration

“We ask justice, we ask equality, we ask that all the civil and political rights that belong to citizens of the United States be guaranteed to us and our daughters forever.” — Susan B. Anthony, Declaration of Rights for Women, July 1876

Thank You to our Generous Sponsors!

As a sponsor of the Women of the Year Award event, these corporations and individuals honored **Lynn Ewart-Paine, Kathleen Hittner, Beverly Najarian, M. Teresa Paiva Weed, Carol Shelton and Toby Simon**, while supporting projects of the Rhode Island Commission on Women such as the Freda H. Goldman Education Award. The Freda H. Goldman Education Award is a scholarship which provides supplemental financial assistance to women in need who are continuing their education.



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Richard W. Besdine, M.D. and Terri Wetle, Ph.D
The Honorable Frank A. Ciccone, III, Senator
Deborah A. Smith



FINANCE COMMITTEE

CHAIR

Joanne Hill, MPA

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Linda H. Newton

EX-OFFICIO

Shanna Wells, M.Ed.

PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Finance Committee is to recommend fiscal administration guidelines and oversee financial procedures for the Rhode Island Commission on Women. Committee members review the annual budget requests of Committees and the Commission, annual and quarterly budget reports and expenditures to insure they are made in accordance with the budget implementation guidelines set forth by the Commission and in accordance with State accounting, purchasing and budgetary procedures.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING FY 2009

1. Reviewed and/or collaborated in the preparation of, and provided recommendations on the following:
 - Annual budget request for the RI Commission on Women;
 - Quarterly and monthly fiscal reports of expenditures;
 - Annual financial integrity report of the RI Commission on Women
2. Monitored fiscal matters of the RICW, reporting quarterly to the Executive Committee and Director.
3. In an effort to obtain additional funds outside of taxpayer dollars, the volunteer commissioners of the RICW took steps to develop a non-profit organization called The RICW Project. The RICW Project's mission is to support the projects and mission of the RICW. During FY 2008, a *pro bono* attorney was retained to assist with the organizational development. With his assistance, bylaws were completed, and in early FY 2009, The RICW Project filed their Articles of Incorporation with the State of Rhode Island. In July, 2009, the IRS officially recognized The RICW Project as a 501 (c) 3 non-profit.



ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Rhode Island Commission on Women is charged with the responsibility to collaborate with other organizations, groups, and state departments on issues of common concern and to advocate for women's equity in all areas of life. RICW Director, Project Management and Administration, Shanna Wells, serves as liaisons between the Commission and outside boards and commissions in the public, private and not-for profit sectors.

LIST OF APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, FY 2009

- Attorney General's Domestic Violence Task Force
- Center for Women and Enterprise Advisory Board
- Civil Rights Roundtable
- Dept. of Corrections Advisory Board on Female Offenders
- Permanent Legislative Child Care Commission
- DELTA Steering Committee on Intimate Partner Violence
- Women Ending Hunger, RI Community Food Bank
- Women's Center of RI DELTA Committee
- Northeaster Girls Collaborative
- New England Regional Women's Commission
- Women's Fund of RI Women's Policy Institute
- RI Coalition Against Human Trafficking
- RI for Community & Justice Disproportionate Minority Contact Juvenile Justice Program
- Leading Women Emerging Women in Business Conference Planning Committee